

Message Text

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DRAFTED BY EUR/EE: KNBROWN

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EUR/EE: NGANDREWS

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PRAGUE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY LONDON IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 236806

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:PFOR, CZ

SUBJECT: PRESS REPORT ON CZECH MILATT VELC

LONDON FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY HARTMAN

1. THE OCTOBER 2 EDITION OF THE LOCAL WEEKLY FAIRFAX JOURNAL CARRIED A FRONT-PAGE ARTICLE TITLED "IT'S MISSION IMPOSSIBLE FOR CZECH SPY." WE UNDERSTAND A SIMILAR REPORT WAS CARRIED IN OTHER SUBURBAN PAPERS BELONGING TO THE ARMY TIMES COMPANY, AND THAT THE ARTICLE WILL ALSO APPEAR NEXT WEEK IN THE ARMY, AIR FORCE AND NAVY TIMES.

2. THE REPORT (COPY POUCHED TO PRAGUE OCTOBER 3) DESCRIBES CZECH ASSISTANT AIR AND MILITARY ATTACHE VELC'S 1972 ATTEMPT TO BRIBE AN ARMY TIMES ARCHIVIST FOR CLASSIFIED MATERIAL. IT NOTES THAT MOST MILATTS, INCLUDING OUR OWN, TRY TO OBTAIN INFO ABOUT THEIR HOST COUNTRIES' DEFENSES. VELC IS CHARACTERIZED AS OVERLY AMBITIOUS AND CLUMSY. THE REPORT QUOTES VELC'S SUPERIOR, COL. SYKORA OF THE CZECH EMBASSY, AS SAYING THAT THE STORY IS UNTRUE AND THAT ITS
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PUBLICATION "IS NOT IN THE BEST INTERESTS OF OUR

TWO COUNTRIES. WE HAVE DETENTE, YOU KNOW."

3. EUR/EE DIRECTOR ANDREWS CALLED IN CHARGE BUZEK OCT 3

AND HANDED HIM A COPY OF THE ARTICLE (BUZEK HAD APPARENTLY NOT KNOWN OF ITS PUBLICATION OCTOBER 2 SINCE HE HAD JUST RETURNED FROM TWO DAY VISIT TO NEW YORK). IN RESPONSE TO A SPECIFIC QUESTION, ANDREWS SAID THAT WE WERE NOT PNING VELC, BUT THAT WE WANTED BUZEK TO HAVE THE ARTICLE READ IT AND GIVE US HIS REACTION. BUZEK INDICATED THAT HE WOULD DO SO. CONVERSATION THEN TURNED TO VANIK VISIT, PROBABLE RETURN OF FOREIGN MINISTER CHNOUPEK TO PRAGUE OCTOBER 5 FOR CENTRAL COMMITTEE MEETING (WHICH BUZEK CONFIRMED WILL TAKE PLACE -- PRAGUE 2584) AND THE VISIT TO WASHINGTON OF DEPUTY HEAD OF THE CC INTERNATIONAL DEPARTMENT STEFANAC OCTOBER 3 AND 4. KISSINGER

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